FBI

Date: 1/31/69
PLAINTEXT

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Via AIRTEL _____
(Priority)

TO: DIRECTOR, FBI (44-38861)

FROM: SAC, MEMPHIS (44-1987) (P)

SUBJECT: MURKIN

OO: ME

Re Atlanta teleype to Bureau, 1/30/69, concerning the interview of Reverend RALPH ABERNATHY, SCLC Headquarters, Atlanta, Georgia.

The results of the investigation conducted by the Memphis Division in regard to the reference of ABERNATHY re Citizens Band radio transmissions and the removal of Negro firemen and policemen from the immediate area of the Lorraine Motel shortly prior to the shooting of Dr. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR., were forwarded to the Bureau by Memphis airtels to the Bureau dated 7/29/68 and 11/21/68.

The only item mentioned by ABERNATHY that has not been fully explained to the Bureau is the fact that Reverend JAMES LAWSON, Memphis, advised ABERNATHY that a Negro policeman who worked the beat which included the motel where Dr. KING was killed was moved off that beat the day KING was killed.

On 1/31/69, [redacted] Intelligence Unit, Memphis PD, advised that the Memphis PD does not maintain any officers on a "walking beat" other

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3-Bureau
1-Atlanta (44-2386) INFO
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Special Agent in Charge

than on special occasions and that from a review of the Memphis PD records he ascertained that there were no Memphis police officers assigned to a "walking beat" in Memphis on the day Dr. KING was killed.

In this regard it is believed that Reverend LAWSON was referring to Detective E. E. REDDITT, Memphis PD, who was removed from a lookout position at engine house #2 of the Memphis Fire Department on 4/4/68 due to the fact a number of threats had been made on REDDITT's life as a result of REDDITT's activities in attending meetings of the striking sanitation workers in Memphis in February and March, 1968. REDDITT was removed from this fire house and two officers of the Memphis PD were assigned at that time to protect REDDITT and members of REDDITT's family.

In view of the above, the Memphis Division does not anticipate interviewing Reverend JAMES LAWSON concerning the information LAWSON furnished to ABERNATHY.

A copy of this airtel is being submitted for the information of the Atlanta Division as Atlanta obtained the information in question as a result of the interview of Reverend ABERNATHY at Atlanta.